

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge receipt of the Office Action dated June 15, 2004, in which the Examiner rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. §§112, 102 and 103. Applicants have amended the claims and respectfully traverse the rejections for the reasons set out below.

§ 112 Rejections

Claim 9 has been amended to replace "comprising" with "comprises."

Claims 13 and 14 have been amended to clarify the recitation with respect to "extracellular matrix molecules,"

Claim 31 has been canceled.

Applicants respectfully submit that these amendment cure the grounds for rejection under § 112. If the Examiner disagrees, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned.

Rejections over Prior Art

Applicants have canceled claims 1-7, 10-11, 16-17, 19-22, 24-29, 31, and 34. Claims 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 23 have been amended to depend from claim 18 and claims 32 and 33 have been amended to depend from claim 30. Because claims 18 and 30 were indicated to be allowable, applicants respectfully submit that these amendments place the claims in condition for allowance.

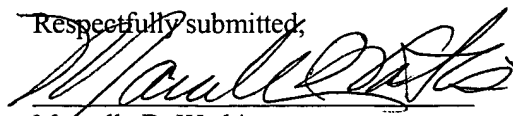
New Claims

New claims 35 and 36 have been added, which each recite an alternate method for making an oligo(poly(ethylene glycol) fumarate) (OPF) coupled to a therapeutic agent. In claim 35 the OPF is activated by activating the OPF by reacting a molar excess of fumaryl chloride over PEG and in claim 36 the OPF is activated by succinylation of end hydroxyl groups of OPF with succinic anhydride. Each of these claims is supported by paragraph [0029] of the specification as filed. Applicants respectfully submit that the new claims are distinguishable over the art for the same reasons as claim 30.

Conclusion

Applicants appreciate the diligence and precision in preparing the Office Action. It is believed that the issues raised in the Office Action have been fully addressed in this response. However, if a telephone conference would facilitate the resolution of any additional issue, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (713) 238-8043. If any fee is due the Commissioner is authorized to charge the Deposit Account 03-2769 of Conley Rose, P.C.

Respectfully submitted,



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